

Evaluation: The only evaluation criterion for Type One writing is that each student must write something in an atmosphere of either no risk or relatively no risk. For students who are not very fluent writers or who need a concrete goal, the sole criterion is the number of written lines, written within a time limit. It is important to use number of written lines rather than sentences. A teacher who requires sentences must read and correct sentence structure, and that is not the purpose of Type One writing. For example, the teacher gives the assignment, "Write ten lines telling what you know about Siberia, and if you cannot think of ten lines of information, list questions." Then the teacher can evaluate the assignment by simply looking at the length and need not read it to see if it was written in sentences. The objective is to help students discover what they know, not to see if their writing is in complete sentences.

Example A, on page 6, is a Type One response written by an eighth grade student to the assignment about Siberia. It has been evaluated with a check because it has ten written lines. Obviously, it was easy to evaluate and the student made it easier by numbering the lines. The correctness of the content and the level of writing skills are not at issue here. The student simply was required to think about a topic and capture questions and possible areas of knowledge or misunderstanding. By using this Type One assignment, the teacher had a chance to assess what the student knew at the time. If the student had not written ten lines, the grade would be a minus. Evaluation for Type One writing should be kept very simple, based on one easily observable trait. An extensive list of possible Type One assignments is on pages 7 to 9. You may want to keep a copy of these pages at your desk for ready reference.

FAQ

Type One writing has a time limit. I have special needs students who are not to have timed tests. What do you suggest?

ANSWER: Because Type One assignments are supposed to be non-threatening (no right or wrong answers) and are graded simply, I would try to modify the time restriction for Type One assignments. My guess is that the non-timed requirement is for tests and quizzes and Type One can easily be considered an exception. But if everything must be non-timed, I have had good success changing the quota (ten lines in four minutes) so that a student in question does not need to produce as much (say, five lines) within the time limit. In this way you have made a reasonable accommodation and have given the student an opportunity to practice writing under time-pressure—a life-long skill. The value of the time limit is that it helps students get down to work immediately and discourages perfectionism because of the pressure of the time limit. I think of Type One as an effort grade rather than an academic grade. ■

How important is the correct formatting of the papers?**FAQ**

ANSWER: The format is a means to an end, not the end. The Collins Writing Program is not about how to head a paper, but if students learn to head the paper the same way, it has significant advantages. First, the heading becomes one less thing to worry about. No student energy needs to be expended trying to figure out what the teacher wants, and when it becomes automatic, there are fewer papers without names; by the second year of the program, it's routine. When students get to Type Three and Type Four writing, the papers have the student record focus correction areas (explanation to follow). If the students write the focus correction areas, the teacher has proof the students know the evaluative criteria and the points. Also, parents and other interested individuals (other teachers, school administrators, curriculum coordinators, etc.) know about your standards for a particular paper. The heading of the paper communicates, at a glance, the type of writing and the evaluation standards.

In addition to the heading, we get questions about the necessity of skipping lines. I am a proponent of skipping lines for a number of reasons: first, skipping lines provides space for students to edit without making a mess of their papers. I find many students are unable to deal with an extensively edited draft because it becomes so messy. They toss the draft away and begin with a fresh sheet. Skipping lines permits editing that is easier to understand, recopy, or retype. Because Type One writing is likely to generate information that could become the basis of Type Two through Type Five writing assignments, having space for revisions, corrections, and elaboration is critical. A second reason to have students skip lines is that papers are easier to read. It has been my experience that double-spaced papers take approximately twenty percent less time to read than single-spaced papers. Any formatting system that can save twenty percent of a teacher's time is worth instituting. A third reason is that double spacing allows more room for teacher or peer comments, and the comments can be placed so that they are easier to understand. Finally, if papers are double-spaced they can be used later for editing practice on new skills. If students keep papers in folders, they have a great source of relevant practice sheets. ■

My favorite follow-up to a Type One writing assignment is the below-the-line activity. In this activity, the students draw a line across the paper where the Type One writing has ended. They then partner up with another student and share each other's writing, adding a specified number of additional written lines "below the line," thus adding to their original list. I find that asking students to "add three additional lines of information or questions that you did not have on your original list" focuses the discussions and makes the students more accountable than just asking students to share.

Tip!

Sample Type One Writing Questions

Type One writing gets ideas on paper—brainstorming. Type One is **timed** and requires a **minimum number** of items or lines. Questions and/or guesses are permitted. Evaluated with a check (✓) or minus (—).


For Activating Prior Knowledge:

- ▶ In eight* lines or more (or five or ten lines, depending on the time you want to take), write the things you know or questions you have about _____.
- ▶ Even though we have not read or discussed it yet, what does the term (or concept or phrase) _____ mean to you? Fill at least four* lines.
- ▶ What do you think this (picture, formula, abbreviation, notation, chart, word, mark, or phrase) means? Why do you think so? Fill seven* lines or more.
- ▶ What do you think a _____ looks like? Describe it in six* lines or more.
- ▶ How do you think a _____ behaves (or is solved or is constructed)? Fill eight* lines or more.

For Reflecting About Learning:

- ▶ What were the most important (or interesting, surprising) points to you from yesterday's discussion about _____? Fill six* lines or more.
- ▶ On the topic we discussed yesterday, fill eight* lines or more about the ideas you understood best. Least.
- ▶ Think about and write down two* "hard questions" about _____.
- ▶ On last night's homework, explain what was the hardest part for you to solve (or understand, complete, read, collect, and so on)? Fill five* lines or more.
- ▶ If you were going to solve (or do or read or study) _____, what would you do differently? Give your explanation in at least six* lines.

*To enhance the brainstorming aspects of this Type One prompt, establish a quota of writing and time limit appropriate for the task.

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- ▶ Now that we have finished our unit on _____, make a list of at least ten* terms that would appear in a book chapter on this topic.
 - ▶ What went well with your group project (or experiment or performance)? What would improve the group's work? Fill five* lines or more.
 - ▶ What kinds of questions (or problems, reading assignments, laboratory activities, new vocabulary, writing assignments, and so on) are hard for you? Fill six* lines or more.
 - ▶ As you think about what we did in class (or lab) today, what was (the easiest, most fun, most challenging, something you would like to do again, differently)? Fill at least seven* lines.
 - ▶ Based on today's discussion, do a 3-2-1 reflection. Write down three things you found interesting, two things that were a bit confusing, and one thing you would like to know more about.
 - ▶ What are two* ways you would go about solving this problem?
 - ▶ Write at least four* examples of _____.
 - ▶ What are three* ways we can get the same (result, solution, answer, outcome)?
 - ▶ List three* (tools, formulas, instruments, reference materials) you think were used to accomplish this.
 - ▶ When you are preparing for a test, what techniques do you use to help you remember important facts? Fill six* lines or more.
 - ▶ Think about the test you just completed and how you prepared for it. What should you have spent more time studying? Less time? Why? Fill six* lines or more.
 - ▶ What are some of the things you do that make you a good (reader, writer, test taker, problem solver, study mate)? Fill five* lines or more.
 - ▶ Describe something that you can do better now than you could last year. Fill six* lines or more.
 - ▶ When I teach this unit on _____ to next year's class, what do you think I could do to make it better? Tell me in ten* lines or more.

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For Predicting:

- ▶ For the upcoming test, what questions do you think I might ask that would require a short, written answer (as opposed to a multiple-choice, true-false, or matching answer)? Give at least four* questions.
- ▶ In five* lines, predict what would happen if _____. Explain why you think so.
- ▶ In five* lines, describe what might have caused the scene you see in this picture.
- ▶ Before we (go on this field trip, conduct this experiment, study this unit, collect this data), write eight* lines about some of the things you hope to find out.

For Making Connections:

- ▶ What relationship does _____ have with current events or your daily life at home or school? Fill at least six* lines.
- ▶ How do you think _____ and _____ are related? Fill five* lines or more.
- ▶ How is _____ (this type of problem, concept) similar to _____ (another type of problem, concept)? Fill seven* lines or more.

For Creative Thinking:

- ▶ What do you think someone in this situation (in a story, news event, and so on) would be thinking? Be worried about? Be happy about? What do you think the other person in this situation would be thinking? Fill at least eight* lines.
- ▶ Describe a way of doing this routine task (such as reviewing homework, passing out lab materials, distributing calculators, signing out instruments or supplies) so that it would be more interesting or efficient to do. Tell me in six* lines or more.
- ▶ What if (electricity emitted sound waves, numbers 0-10 had assigned colors, copy machines did not exist, houses could not be built with right angles, and so on)? What would life be like? Fill at least ten* lines.

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2018-2019 SRP Classroom Observation Form (Team use only)

Course/Level: _____ Time of Observation: Opening ___ Middle ___ Closing ___	
Rigor and Standard-based Instruction Answers the question: What is the teacher doing?	Evidence and Description Comments <i>Please give examples for clarity</i>
Standards are posted and applied as a focus for the lesson	
Clear learning targets are posted and used during the lesson	
Classroom is used to facilitate learning	
Prior knowledge is used to build coherent content understanding	
Teacher uses several methods to help students with working memory	
Teachers uses technology to support instruction	
Teacher monitors student understanding of the content and provides supportive feedback	
Teacher uses formative assessment to modify teaching and learning activities	
Teacher engages students in mental processes beyond recall responses	
Teacher provides various opportunities are provided for students to show their understanding of the content	
A variety of students respond during the observation	
Students responses or products demonstrate reasoning	
Students demonstrate and communicate their learning	
Assignment (work) allows students to show the depth or extent of their learning	
Time is provided during instructional period for re-teach and extra help	
Rubrics or scoring guides are posted to making learning expectations well-defined	
Exemplars are posted and used as a learning tool	
Teacher plans an intentional summary of what was covered in the lesson	
Overall Observation of Rigor & Standard-Based Instruction	___ Basic ___ Proficient ___ Advanced
Student-Centered Engagement Answers the question: What are the students doing?	Evidence and Description Comments <i>Please give examples for clarity</i>
Low Engagement	
Students listen to teacher lecture with limited interaction or discussion	
Students listening with no or limited reading or writing	
Students complete worksheets with no or limited follow-up	
Moderate Engagement	
Students complete bell-ringer or warm-up activity with follow-up	
Students listen to teacher lecture with visuals and respond to high level questioning	
Teacher models and all learners practice	
Students use literacy strategies to connect with the content	
Students use numeracy strategies to understand the subject	
Students use technology with feedback from other students or the teacher	
Teacher monitors student understanding	
Learners experience differentiated instruction	
High Engagement	
Students work in pairs or groups on assignment facilitated by the teacher	
Students work on projects or hands-on activities facilitated by the teacher	
Students use technology to teach each other	
Students work on assignment teaching others while working in pairs or groups	
Students peer edit or give feedback to improve product	
Students design/complete independent project with a written paper, oral presentation, product or service	
Students use technology to complete student-designed assignment	
Students self-evaluate to improve quality of work	
Students present oral reports and receive meaningful feedback	
Students demonstrate relevancy across two or more subjects in completing assignment	
Students are involved in personal activities of closure	
Overall Observation of Student-Centered Engagement	___ Low ___ Moderate ___ High